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SOUL PROSPERITY.

3 John 2.

How excellent, how comely, when those who are united in one common bond of faith, who have one common interest in the common salvation, delight in each other's peace and prosperity.

To have a healthy soul in a healthy body is to be in the highly favoured state which is here referred to; and if, with these great mercies, the Lord is pleased to add a third—a prosperous course in life, success in our worldly callings—nothing more is left to be desired.

In the character of Gaius, as drawn in this epistle, many things appear to show the rich grace of God. The truth was in him; not in his head only, nor on his tongue only, but in his heart. He was a diligent observer of the ordinances of Christ, he walked in the truth, he was faithful in all he did to the brethren and to strangers, and he was liberal in his gifts for the advancement of the church.

These, my brethren, are the marks of that spiritual prosperity which this excellent disciple of Christ enjoyed, and which I cannot but persuade myself we must desire, if we have indeed tasted that the Lord is gracious.

"Even as thy soul prospereth."

Soul prosperity—this is not mere mental power, nor general increase in knowledge. A man may have rare natural gifts, and these may be cultivated and refined by study, but his soul may not be in a healthy condition.

A prosperous soul must be a renewed soul, born of God, transported from the wild into the good olive-tree, planted of God. The seed of grace must be there, or no good will be there. A prosperous soul must be in vital union to Christ, or no life and spiritual power can be there. Now, taking these two things for granted, we say the prosperity of the soul is its growth and increase in knowledge, faith, love, and patience, by which we advance from the feebleness of plants to trees of righteousness, from babes to young men and fathers, to the fulness of the stature of a man in Christ Jesus.

It must include the comforts that flow from the evidence of our adoption into God's family. The clear shining of God's favour, the felt enjoyment of his presence, a sweet communion and fellowship with him, is our very life. "Thy favour is life, and thy loving-kindness is better than life." It consists in a

moderate degree of freedom from legal bondage, from the agitations of fear and doubt. The soul must be in a prosperous state when it can call God its portion, and feel happy and secure in his care and love. We often pray that the word of God may be owned in the ministry for the edification of the saints. Now, it is so, just as we do really prosper in our souls.

It must include the healthy state of the affections, and their right direction. The affections will be set on the right objects, and firmly set on them. I need not tell you what they are. They are things spiritual, holy, heavenly. These are the hands of the soul, by which it grasps and holds fast the really good things of the word and gospel of Christ.

The advantages of such a state are so many, that I cannot but think we must deem it a very desirable thing. The prosperity of the soul is the best sort of prosperity: it is the most secure, and there is no danger attending it. It will regulate other kinds of prosperity, and it will help us to sustain adversity and affliction. Men have been ruined when they have prospered in their worldly affairs without an inward prosperity of soul. It has raised them to dangerous elevations, or depressed them below the level if adversity has followed. The truth is we are not fitted to have either wealth or poverty without this inward ballast.

We may ask then how it is promoted. It is the rare and choice gift of God. But God works by means, and of these we must mention—the ministry of the word. It is the wish, the earnest prayer of a true minister of Christ, to see those under his care in a prosperous state. It is no credit, no comfort to him, that his hearers should be like Pharoah's lean kine, or as the ears that were blasted by the east wind. We do wish that grace, mercy, and peace may be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of our God and Saviour. But, then, do you not see from hence the need there is that you should hear that word. You cannot profit by a sermon if you do not hear it. I have never seen any good from that gadding about from place to place in which some indulge. Right enough, if a person either think he can be more profited, or made more useful elsewhere, by all means let him go, and, for my part, I would sincerely pray that peace may attend him. But the Scripture speaks against instability. "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel." The ordinance of the supper, and prayer, and the constant reading the Holy Scriptures, are also means of prosperity.

Then there are also adverse influences. *Contentions and unholy strife among brethren.* These, like so many locusts, eat up every green thing, and leave nothing but barrenness and desolation behind. The edifying in love is just the opposite of this. In the world also, in its spirit and maxims, we have influences, which, if not guarded against, will wither and blight the graces of the spirit, and leave the soul barren. One who is engaged with worldly occupation will have two questions to consider—What will promote the welfare of my occupation, and the prosperity of the soul? Even as thy soul prospereth, in that way go on, and go so far, but stand still, and make a solemn pause when thy soul does not prosper.

Sanctified afflictions. God often uses this instrument. When afflictions are laid upon the ungodly, they wax worse, and worse, and worse. Why should he be stricken any more? He will revolt more and more. When they serve their end they bring us nearer to God, they lead us to see more of the vanity of the world, and break many of our idols and remove them. The gardener takes his knife and cuts down the tree, lopping off its most towering branches, and the tree bears better. Every branch in me that beareth fruit, He purgeth it or pruneth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. "I will dig about it, and dung it."

The evidences by which it is known. A man recovering from sickness will begin to feel a relish for food, and will eat it with eagerness. So a soul that is healthy will have an appetite for the food of God's Word. Upon a diseased and sickly stomach even the most wholesome food will turn acid and cause

pain. I cannot but think there is something of this also in soul sickness. When the children of Israel began to loathe the manna, it was no good sign. They cried out for quails, and they had them greatly to their hearts' content. The prosperous soul says, "Thy word was found, and I did eat it, and it was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." What would you think of the man who must be fed on delicacies? You would say he is not healthy.

Activity. The person that must be parloured up, who cannot stand the refreshing breezes, must be in a sickly state. The man of health is active at his daily toil, with a cheerful and willing heart. A prosperous soul is active in God's service and for God's honour. He will be at some useful post for Christ, his chosen Master.

The last evidence I shall mention is a concern for the prosperity of others. It must be in religious matters that we feel for others in proportion as we feel for ourselves. If we feel the value of these things we shall say, "Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good!" This little leaven of grace will diffuse itself abroad, and we shall have a real revival of religion.

Finally. There is something which portends awful things to the ungodly. If their prosperity in other matters were measured by their prosperity in this most important kind of prosperity, what a wretched state must they be in. It will finally come to this. What will health or wealth do in a sick and dying day! If matters are not on a right and safe footing then, all will be a failure. It is only as the soul prospers that all will be right with us in that day. This will one day be our only store, our whole patrimony, and our rich inheritance. A prosperous soul will meet death with sweet composure, and will have an abundant entrance into God's everlasting kingdom and glory. "Even as thy soul prospereth." Amen.

Liverpool. T. DAWSON.

"LED BY THE RIGHT WAY."

BY THE REV. H. WATTS, STANNINGLEY, LEEDS.

"And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation."—PSALM cvii. 7.

THE language of this psalm has not, as some have supposed, exclusive reference to the children of Israel as a nation, but to the deliverances that the Lord works for his universal church in all ages. The fact is, the psalmist takes up the figure of some wayfaring men travelling across the sandy deserts: there, in addition to a long and toilsome journey, they would be exposed to the sun's burning heat over head and the blistering sand under foot; to terrific sandstorms and murderous robbers; to the pangs of hunger, and the still greater agonies of thirst; to the great danger of mistaking their way, and the probability of perishing ere they could reach their destination. He shows how, notwithstanding all these perils, the Lord by his providence protects them on their journey—

"In foreign realms and lands remote,
Supported by His care,
Through burning climes they pass unhurt,
And breathe in tainted air."

Then he finished his description by saying, "And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation."

Although it is plain that the psalmist chiefly alludes to the Lord's work on behalf of Zion's spiritual travellers, and makes use of these travellers as types of them; still he designs us to admire God's providence in protecting the sons of men in undertaking hazardous journies and performing them in safety. We ourselves have sometimes performed such journies. It is true, we have never travelled over the sandy deserts of Arabia; but we have travelled far by land

and water, by train and steamer, and by other modes of conveyance, as well as on foot, and have often been placed in circumstances of imminent peril; yet we have been kept in safety. Terrific accidents have occurred in all parts of the land. In one moment a terrible concussion has sent scores of souls into eternity; from the crushed van the wounded and mangled have been drawn forth amid shrieks of agony, and the cry of the widow and the wail of the fatherless have arisen to a protecting God; but *we* have been kept in safety. All praise to the Lord our Keeper. He hath given His angels charge over us to keep us in all our ways. Never let us take these journies in future without first committing ourselves to God's almighty and ever-watchful protection; and when at our destination we arrive in safety, let us, bare-headed and with bended knee, thank him for having spread over us the shadow of his protecting wings.

In the context we have given us the characteristics of the people who in a spiritual sense are led by the Lord. They are said to be "the redeemed of the Lord, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy." To redeem, is to pay a price for the deliverance of slaves sold into bondage. We are all, by nature, sold into the bondage of sin and Satan, of the law and of death. But, for his people's redemption, Christ hath paid to God the ransom price, and through it they shall be finally freed from the dominion of every enemy. They are said to be "gathered out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south." God's elect are scattered up and down the world. Jesus tells us that "They shall come from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God." It is for this purpose the gospel is to be preached to every creature. Missionaries, then, should be encouraged to go abroad, and should be supported. But it may be asked, "Cannot God gather in his elect without missionaries?" Without doubt He *could*, if he would: only the Bible says he *won't*. He has chosen missionaries to be the heralds of the cross; and to that fact we ourselves, as a nation, are indebted for the introduction of the gospel. This upsets altogether the selfish and abstract theory of some who say, "You must preach only to the elect." Who knows them all? To whom has the Lord given a special commission to point them out? We say, with John Newton, "Show us who the elect are, and we will then consider the propriety of preaching only to them." John Berridge very properly told his bishop that as long as God had told him to preach the gospel to every creature, the whole world was his parish. That was a sensible mode of putting it. God hath a people of all nations, kindreds, tribes, and tongues, to gather out of the world into the church, and, at last, to gather to glory; and the Lord grant, reader, that we may be found amongst them. But again, it is said of this people, "They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses." How descriptive is this language of converted souls led to wander in the world as a wilderness, to find the way of life, and reach heaven at last! Once the world was their chief charm; it is not so now. Once they could feed upon its pleasures; they cannot do so now. For heavenly joys they hunger, thirst, and faint. Unable to obtain on earth the satisfaction they seek, their last resort is prayer. Like travellers lost in the mountains and entangled in their mazes, getting more and more confused the further they go, they shout out in earnest, "Lost! lost! O Lord, send help! Save, Lord, or we perish!" Then, brought to this crisis, they find the Lord, like some friendly guide, at hand, ready and able to deliver them out of their distresses. Have we these characteristics? Can we say from past experience that they are ours? Because if we can, we may thereby know that we are "led by the Lord."

But what kind of a way is it in which the Lord's people are led? It is the way through the *wilderness*. God taught his ancient people this lesson when

he brought them out of Egypt. If they had journeyed through the land of the Philistines they might have reached Canaan in less than a fortnight. But God led them a forty years' journey through the wilderness. And why? Chiefly for two reasons. First, that He might humble, try, and prove them. Secondly, that He might show them his delivering power. They needed this discipline. And so do we, if we are bound for Canaan. We need wilderness fare and wilderness journies to humble us, try what we are made of, and prove to us our sinfulness, weakness, and helplessness. We are by nature very proud, and we need fetching down. We fancy we are strong, and the Holy Spirit must convince us that we are weak. We think much of our own holiness, and we must be taught that we are sinful. But when we are brought here, the Lord shows himself to be for us a God all-powerful, all-wise, all-gracious, all-good; and when he delivers us out of our trials, we sing, as Israel did on the borders of the Red Sea, "The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation." We thus find, by experience, that the Lord's way is a *singular* way. It was singular to human reason that the Lord should choose rather to take his people to Canaan by the long rout than by the short rout. But God's singularity is his glory. We read in Proverbs, "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter." We must not think that the Lord will lose part of his glory by telling us all his secrets. Now, we are very fond of marking out our own way, but there is no irregularity about it. It is so smooth, so nice, so plain, so reasonable and pleasant to flesh and blood: the last thing to say of it is that it is singular. It is the way of all the world, and therefore very common. But we must learn that—

> "'Tis not on beds of ease,
> But on a thorny road,
> We prove the promise all of grace,
> And God a faithful God."

Then the way in which the Lord leads his people is the *way to Christ*. Every struggle, every victory, leads us nearer to Him—the Way, the Truth, and the Life. If the way, reader, in which you are being led doth not bring you nearer to Christ, it is not the way in which God leads his people. Every trial should wean us from self, the flesh, and the world, to endear Him more and more to us in his person, blood, righteousness, and salvation. A fisherman's daughter was dying. She was then asked what she thought of Jesus? "Jesus," said she, "Jesus—I cleave to him as the limpets cleave to the rock." The infant limpets, covered with their shells, seek some place on the rock covered by the sea; and when they have fixed on a suitable place, they rarely move from it for life. To the strong surface these mollusca cleave; and they cannot be easily dislodged. So said this poor girl, "I cleave to Jesus"—to Jesus, the Rock of Ages—"as the limpets cleave to the rock." Blessed is that way that leads us to cleave to Jesus as the limpets cleave to the rock! For this is the *right* way. It is right, though rough; right, though thorny; right, though singular; right, though apparently unreasonable; right, though it is dark; right, though it crushes human hopes; right at the beginning, right all the way through, right to the end. If God leads, the right One leads. He cannot lead wrong. If you judge God's way to be wrong, you are wrong. Nothing is wrong that God does, for "He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works."

And what is the purpose that our Divine leader has in view in thus leading us? The purpose is that we may "go to a city of habitation." If a guide should undertake to lead us by curious and unknown ways through a strange country to a certain destination, his purpose throughout in leading us through any given portion of the track would be to bring us nearer and nearer to our destination. Just so it is with our Divine leader. It matters little which way we are led, or where by Him we are led. His object is to bring us nearer and

nearer to the desired haven. As the poet says—

"Thy flock, Thy own peculiar care,
Though now they seem to roam uneyed,
Are led or driven only where
They best and safest may abide."

We may, like ignorant persons, question our Guide's methods of procedure; we may ask again and again, "Is this the way in which I should be led?" But our doubts, and questionings, and bewilderments, do not alter the fact that every turn we take brings us nearer to heaven. Just as the traveller on the road counts the mile-stones, and as he passes one and another cries out, "One mile less to travel!" so as we pass crosses and trials we may cry, "One cross less to bear! one trial nearer heaven!" Let us be assured of this—we shall reach heaven at last. The children of Israel reached Canaan after all their toils. They had to face the Red Sea, to feel the pangs of hunger at the wilderness of Sin, to thirst at Rephidim, to encamp in the desert of Sinai, and to depend on God's providence for forty years in the wilderness, yet they reached Canaan at last. So shall it be with all who are led by the Spirit of God. As they march forward they may sing—

"Why should I shrink at pain or woe,
Or feel at death dismay?
I've Canaan's goodly land in view,
And realms of endless day."

Pain they must have. Woe they must expect as a heritage. In the world they must have tribulation. But pain, and woe, and tribulation, shall only fit them more and more for the joys and employments of the heavenly Canaan. As Henry Ward Beecher says, "Christians are like vases; they must pass through the fire ere they can shine; and often the very furnace and flame which they call destruction, is only burning in the graces which are to be their everlasting beauty and glory." Without doubt, those who in God's service have had the hardest fare on earth, will sing the loudest in heaven. The man who has travelled the farthest on foot is the man who best enjoys rest. The warrior who has been in the thick of the battle is the one who is most glad to retire on his laurels. The mariner who has been tossed on the stormiest seas will give the heartiest welcome to the long looked for shore. Let us not, then, murmur at a long race, a hard battle, or a few tempests; we shall, through them all, be in a fitter state for enjoying the glory that is to follow.

Then when we arrive at our destined home we shall find it "a city of habitation." This is a sweet description of heaven. Heaven is not compared to a scattered village with a sparse population, but to a city where multitudes of people congregate, to a city well inhabited. We have no sympathy with those who believe that only few will find their way to heaven. A miserable set they must be who can only judge of heaven's area by the limited capacities of their feeble intellects. Thank God, heaven is a *city*, the largest city in the universe, and the best populated. It is inhabited by the right sort of people. This is more than can be said of any earthly city. In our cities there are too many of the wrong sort. But all who reach heaven shall find the place fitted for them, and themselves for the place. And this great city always shall be inhabited. There is no fear of its depopulation, or of a decrease in the census. All who are admitted there shall dwell in it as citizens for ever. Sinner, art thou being led this way by the Lord? If thou art not, thou art being led the wrong way, and that way the way to hell, by Satan. Ask God to be thy guide to a better world, and he will not refuse thy request. And let us give the Lord the glory if we are being led thither, seeing that all in this blessed city who have arrived there at last, though once they questioned God's leadings, now confess, with joy, that they were wrong, and their Divine leader was right, for the way in which they were led was the right way to a "a city of habitation."

THE OLD SIFTER.

"Satan has desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat."—LUKE xxii. 31.

HERE there is an allusion to the work of the husbandman when engaged in separating the chaff from the wheat. He secured the desired result by throwing up the grain in a sieve, as, by so doing, the worthless was blown away by the wind, and the valuable remained behind. In a somewhat similar manner God is represented as winnowing his people, "For, lo, I will command, and will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth." Without pursuing anything like a rigid parallel between the husbandman and his grain, and Satan's treatment of believers, we may notice two or three striking features of similarity. In the sifting process there are three things noticeable,—elevation, agitation, and separation. Whom Satan desired to sift he would fain *elevate*, that is, after his own kind of exaltation. To ensure a deep and heavy fall to believers he would lift them up, for none know better than he that "a haughty spirit goes before a fall." He cherishes in the disciples of Jesus everything which partakes of self-complacency and pride, and would thus render them self-confident and heedless of temptation and danger. In such a state humiliation is certain, for he "that exalteth himself shall be abased." Mark the fall of Peter. Even Paul was imperilled by a divine vision through "the abundance of the revelations" made to him. Let the truth be ever remembered—whom the devil designs to be cast down, he would first lift up. Do you dread the thought of being tossed in his old sieve? Then, be humble! "He that is low needs fear no fall." In the sifting process there is *agitation*. God has only for a short time, and in a limited measure, to allow Satan to have his own way, and he will very soon create tumult in the heart and in the church. Before the death of the Lord Jesus there was such an awful shaking that Judas was blown away, and Peter appeared, for a time, to have all his faith and love shaken out of him. It must have been a terrific agitation which could make that eminent apostle lose all his self-possession and semblance of piety. The truth holds good in every case; he whom Satan has fairly in his sieve, and whom he puffs up, shall not escape with impunity. The finishing feature of the winnowing process is *separation*. The bad is carried away from the good. Of course, Satan has no design to make believers any better by anything which he feels disposed to do. He would fain be able to hold them up to the world and say, "Look this way, all ye credulous ones, who believe that there is anything like real religion, and confess your miserable mistake. Behold this man, once a fair and flourishing professor, apparently 'wheat' of genuine quality, and yet, as you perceive, he is nothing but 'chaff!'" But God overrules even the wrath of Apollyon, and makes it to praise him. Despite all the boasting of the arch enemy, all that he can do when testing true believers is to cast away the worthless. Doubtless he is very frequently led to confess, that with all his subtlety he has been all the while striving against himself, working in the dark, like a fool. It must be no small source of mortification to him when he finds that his cherished and favourite purpose is baffled, and that God overrules his mighty malice for his own glory!

But we are compelled, in all honesty, to give even Satan his due, and we attend to this duty with the utmost willingness. If it be a matter of surprise, and a source of deep humiliation to the believer, that a more respectable character has not been appointed to do this work of sifting, yet we are brought to the acknowledgment that he attends to it with no laggard hand. Having been engaged in this line of business ever since God commenced to make saints out of sinners, as might very naturally be expected, he never deals in half and easy measures. Never did husbandman with more satisfaction to himself winnow his wheat, than does Satan elevate, agitate, and separate the goodly from the vile in the hearts of the people of God. Thoroughness is the

characteristic of all his doings. After searching the most ancient of inspired annals, we have found nothing which may be construed into a reflection upon this feature of his work. Complaints have frequently been made of his rough usage, but none whatever respecting the completeness of his sifting. Never did any hapless victim escape from his unceremonious handling without saying in a language unmistakable, "Enough, I am satisfied." Take as admonitory examples, Job, David, Peter. Whatever ill name Satan may have, it must yet be conceded, that he handles his sieve with the utmost skill and tact, although the subjects of the process cannot but hate him with a perfect hatred.

There are certain things in connection with this sifting it were well to remember. The sieve, the season, the duration, and the severity of the process, are appointed, fixed, and are wholly under the causative or permissive good pleasure of God. The malignant design of the enemy must surely be frustrated, because his power is bounded by the Almighty. When the wicked one looked with envy and hatred upon the patriarch of Uz, before being able to inflict calamity he was compelled to solicit the Divine permission. When he obtained it, there was such a limiting clause as neither Satan's subtlety could evade, nor power break, "and the Lord said unto Satan, Behold all that he hath is in thy power, only upon himself put not forth thine hand." When the arch foe expressed dissatisfaction, with multiplied and ill repressed rage, because unable to handle his sieve so effectually as he desired, and obtained enlarged powers, there was yet the Divine limitation, "Behold, he is in thine hand, only *save his life.*" Just as in the case of Job, so is it with every believer: infinite wisdom, changeless love, and omnipotent might, have thrown around him "a hedge" which the unscrupulous enemy cannot overtop. At least, *the spiritual life* of the true disciple is a sacred thing which shall not be destroyed—it is "a life hid with Christ in God." This blessed persuasion may be cherished with absolute certainty. *More than this. The sifting process contributes to the spiritual well-being of the tried.* It serves to test and to evidence vital piety; it produces humility; it shows in the most significant manner the necessity and excellency of grace; and the desirableness of becoming strong in "the grace which is in Christ Jesus;" it tends to induce a walk and conversation more circumspect and devout. In brief, the grand design of trial is to empty us of self-sufficiency and to fill us with "the fulness of God," to abase the creature and to exalt the Divine deliverer, who has said—that upon him we should habitually repose as the source of all-sufficient strength and "everlasting consolation." "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Fail it may, in degree, but not wholly. "Yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth." Oh! to realise the fact with a more efficacious faith, that a compassionate and prevalent intercession represents the lightest interests of his people and ensures them! "Behold," says he who in the days of his flesh delights to call himself "the Son of man," but who is now a Redeemer glorified, "I am alive for evermore." That life is the sure guarantee of the saints' perpetual being and highest well-being. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

"Bound by His word, he will display
A strength proportioned to our day;
And, when united trials meet,
Will show a path of safe retreat."

Grahamstown, R. H. BROTHERTON.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

"WHO shall separate us from the love of Christ?" exclaims the great apostle at the close of his magnificent eighth chapter to the Romans. The whole chapter is a lofty argument for the ultimate safety of all true believers. The man who wrote this wonderful chapter was no middle-age theologian; he was

not Augustin, or Luther, or Zwinkle, or Knox. He was not John Calvin; *although he was a Calvinist.* He was the intrepid man who had fought through a great fight of affliction, and run the gauntlet of a thousand temptations, who had withstood triumphantly everything that earth or hell could level against him. He it is who concludes this masterly argument for the perseverance of the saints, by exclaiming, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"

Some have insisted that this means *our* love *to* Christ. This would be a noble meaning. Who shall separate me from my love to my Saviour? Who shall persuade me to give him up? Who shall fright me away from the cross? Who shall dislodge me from the Rock? Who shall wean my heart from its chiefest delight, or tempt me to betray him? This would be a noble meaning. A Paul, or a Calvin, or a Wesley, might use it, without suspicion of vain-boasting.

But Paul utters a still nobler thought. "Who shall separate me from my Saviour's *love for me?*" The expression "love of Christ" in this thrilling passage clearly signifies the divine affection which Jesus bears to his people. *Christ's love to us* is the cap-stone of the argument for the final victory of believers. Paul had been just announcing that "there was no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus." He had gone on to show how converted souls were covered under the wing of God's protection, how they were adopted into sonship, and how their justification had been secured by the atonement of Calvary. Step by step he ascends the mount of Assurance, until from the summit he shouts exultingly, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?' And this sublime confidence is not based on Paul's own moral courage, or his most solemn resolution, or on any prayers of God's people, or on the protection of saints or angels. It is based simply on *Christ's covenant* with his people—on what Christ had done for Paul on Calvary, on what he had done for him near Damascus, on what he had promised to continue to do for him to the end. Christ had promised to save Paul, if Paul would believe on him. He had agreed to lift Paul—not half way to heaven, that the fall might be all the more terrible—but *entirely* to the pearly gates of the everlasting rest. Salvation was not a bare possibility with the great apostle: it was an absolute certainty. He *knew* whom He had believed. He knew that he would "be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." He believed that "He who had begun a good work" in him would "perform it," would complete it, "until the day of Jesus Christ." He believed that Christ "is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory." Paul, in other words, believed in God's *perseverance with his saints.*

Is not this the only ground for any Christian's confidence? It is not based on the Christian's promise to God, but on God's promise to him. It is not founded on a Christian's merits, but on Christ's merits. I do not rest my certainty of salvation on my love to Jesus, but on the love of Jesus towards me as a believer.

> "'Twas grace that kept me till this day,
> And will not let me go."

My union to Christ is a vital one, exclaims the sincere Christian, and I know that no one shall be able to pluck me out of his hands. All Christian assurance rests just here—that Christ has determined to save every faithful believer, and Christ's love is omnipotent. Every sincere Christian, of every denomination, stands on this rock. They all meet here and practically coincide in this assurance of faith. Paul was a Calvinist (as we have just said) in emphasizing the security of believers through the covenant of grace. He was also a *Wesleyan*, in magnifying and making prominent the love of God.

Rowland Hill, who prayed with an Episcopalian liturgy and preached after a Methodist style, did not come short of the utmost Calvinistic faith in the

final security of all true believers. In his old age he used to repeat these quaint, beautiful lines:—

"And when I'm to die,
Receive me, I'll cry,
For Jesus has loved me, I cannot tell why;
But this do I find,
We two are so joined,
He'll not be in glory and leave me behind."

When this good old man came to his dying hour, he lay for a time in apparent unconsciousness. But a friend put his lips close down to Mr. Hill's ear, and whispered the favourite lines—

"And when I'm to die," etc.

The light came back to his closing eye. A smile beamed on his countenance. His lips moved in a vain attempt to repeat the precious death-cry of victory. Here was triumphant assurance to the last; and we venture to assert that no man ever died in intelligent, happy, well-founded Christian faith, who did not found his hope of eternal salvation, simply and exclusively, on the love of Jesus.—*Independent (American).*

Correspondence.

THE BAPTIST CHURCH AT COLERAINE.

To the Editors of the Primitive Church Magazine.

GENTLEMEN,—There are several statements in "Viator's" letter the accuracy of which I am inclined to doubt; but not being possessed of sufficient information, I cannot touch *all* the points in that epistle. He gives the idea that I have written several letters besides the last on the same subject. Now, I beg to assure him that this is a mistake. To be sure, it is a mistake of not much importance; but if a man be inaccurate in one thing, he may be inaccurate in another.

While he denies the truth of my statement that "other pastors of the same church and agents of the same society receive the munificent sum of £200 a year," he admits the truth of that statement at least in the case of "*one* pastor," who, he says, "from September, 1860, to September, 1862, received £200 a year;" but intimates that the present minister is not in the receipt of "anything like that sum." Now I went on the supposition that the congregation is in as good a condition at present as it was formerly, and consequently that no change had taken place in its finances, at least *for the worse*. Your correspondent informs us, however, that the congregation has decreased both in number and means, and accounts for this change by the fact that the minister to whom he refers "gathered around him those who were able to give, but who left the congregation when he left." As your correspondent is probably better informed than myself on this point, I shall accept of his explanation. Not only so, but I am glad that the statement has been made. Justice to the good man who is now ministering there requires the truth to be told. It would be very unfair to represent him as receiving a larger salary than he actually does. My object is simply to ascertain the truth, and if in any thing I am in error, I shall be most happy to be corrected. But I think you will admit that the fact that those whom that minister collected would leave the only Baptist congregation in the town as soon as he left, would appear very improbable. If such was the case, the denomination was not much the better for them.

"Viator's" views of the ministry appear to me very *commercial*. He says no man suited for mission work

in Ireland, would think of leaving his friends in England, and spheres of labour where he could get £200 a year, "to labour in Ireland for £75 a year." I am afraid too many act on this principle; but I have met with few so outspoken. No doubt a reasonable amount of temporal support is necessary; but it is my opinion that the men best fitted for serving Christ in any country are not men of *flash*—not men who hunt after *popularity*—not men who boast of singular *success*, which after all generally comes to nothing—not men who value themselves by the greatness of their emoluments; but humble, sober-minded men, who will patiently labour amidst discouragement, poverty, and reproach—men of stern, unbending integrity, who will faithfully carry out the discipline of the New Testament, though at the expense of offending a time-serving world and a time-serving *church*.

"Viator" need not fear for the cause of missions in Ireland. The evolution of truth will never hurt a good cause. That the society has accomplished much good, and that its committee act from the best intentions, I have no doubt; and I hope none of its agents are so inefficient as "Viator" imagines.

Yours truly,
JOHN BROWN.

THE TITLE "REVEREND."

To the Editors of the Primitive Church Magazine.

DEAR SIRS,—May I inquire if any of your readers can inform me of the origin of the title "*Reverend*," and when it was first introduced into the church? I wonder what Christ and his apostles would have thought about it. A little light on the subject will much oblige

Yours truly,
AN INQUIRER.

Poetry.

HERE IS MY HEART.

HERE is my heart—my God, I give it thee;
I heard Thee call and say,
"Not to the world, my child, but unto me"—
I heard, and will obey.
Here is love's offering to my King,
Which in glad sacrifice I bring—
Here is my heart!

Here is my heart—surely the gift, though poor,
My God will not despise;
Vainly and long I sought to make it pure,
To meet Thy searching eyes;
Corrupted once in Adam's fall,
The stains of sin pollute it all—
My guilty heart!

Here is my heart—my heart so sad before,
Now by Thy grace made meet;
Yet bruised and wearied, it can only pour
Its anguish at Thy feet;
It groans beneath the weight of sin;
It sighs salvation's joy to win—
My mourning heart.

Here is my heart—in Christ its longings end,
Near to the cross it draws—
It says, "Thou art my portion, O my Friend!
Thy blood my ransom was."
And in the Saviour it has found
What blessedness and peace abound—
My trusting heart.

Here is my heart—ah! Holy Spirit, come,
Its nature to renew,
And consecrate it wholly as Thy home,
A temple fair and true.
Teach it to love and serve thee more,
To fear Thee, trust Thee, and adore—
My cleansed heart!

Here is my heart—it trembles to draw near
The glory of Thy throne;
Give it the shining robe Thy servants wear,
Of righteousness Thine own;
Its pride and folly chase away,
And Thou art wise, and just, and true—
My waiting heart!

Here is my heart—O Friend of friends, be near
To make the tempter fly;
And when my latest foe I wait with fear,
Give me the victory.
Gladly on Thy love reposing,
Let me say, when life is closing,
"Here is my heart!"

—*From the German of Ehrenfried Liedich.*

Page for the Young.

HOW TWO RULES WORKED

"HERE are two rules for you, Fred," said Giles Warner, looking up from the paper he was reading and addressing a younger brother, who was sitting by the stove, playing with a favourite dog.

"Well, what are they? let's have them," said Fred, suspending his sport with the dog.

"The first is, 'Never get vexed with anything you can help.' The second is, 'Never get vexed with anything you can't help.'"

"Are not those rules as applicable to you as to me?" inquired Fred, archly.

"No doubt of that," replied Giles, good-humouredly; "but then it is so much easier to hand over a piece of good advice to another than to keep it for one's own personal use. It is a kind of generosity that don't require any self-denial." Fred laughed.

"But what say you to these rules?" continued Giles; "how would it work if we adopt them?"

"I think they take a pretty wide and clean sweep," said Fred. "They don't leave a fellow any chance at all to get vexed."

"That might be an objection to them," said Giles, "if any one was wiser, better, or happier for getting vexed. I think they are sensible rules. It is foolish to vex ourselves about anything that can be helped, and it is useless to vex ourselves about what can't be helped. Let us assist each other to remember and obey these two simple rules. What say you?"

"I'll agree to it," said Fred, who was usually ready to agree to anything his brother proposed, if it was only proposed good-humouredly.

"That's too bad!" exclaimed Fred the next morning, while making preparations for school.

"What is the matter?" inquired Giles.

"I have broken my shoe-string, and it is vexatious, I'm in such a hurry."

"It is vexatious, no doubt," replied Giles, "but you must not get vexed, for this is one of the things that can't be helped. You can find a string in the left corner of the upper drawer in mother's bureau."

"But we shall be late at school," said Fred.

"No we shan't," said Giles. "We shall only have to walk a little faster. Besides, if you keep cool, you will find the string, and put it in much sooner than you can if you become vexed and worried."

"That's true," said Fred, as he started for the string, quite restored to good humour.

Several opportunities occurred during the day for putting in practice the newly adopted rules. The best was this:

In the evening, Giles broke the blade of his knife, while whittling a hard piece of wood.

"It can't be helped," said Fred, "so you must not get vexed about it."

"It might have been helped," said Giles, "but I can do better than to fret about it. I can learn a lesson of care for the future, which may some day save a knife more valuable than this. The rules work well. Let's try them to morrow."

The next morning Fred devoted an hour before school to writing a composition. After he had written half a dozen lines, his mother called him off to do something for her. During his absence, his sister Lucy made use of his pen and ink to write her name in a school-book. In doing this she carelessly let fall a drop of ink on the page he was writing. Fred returned while she was busily employed in doing what she could to repair the mischief.

"You have made a great blot on my composition," he exclaimed, looking over her shoulder.

"I am very sorry. I did not mean to do it," said Lucy.

Fred was so vexed that he would have answered his sister very roughly, if Giles had not interposed.

"Take care, Fred; you know the thing is done, and can't be helped."

Fred tried hard to suppress his vexation. "I know it was an accident," he said pleasantly, after a brief struggle with himself.

Lucy left the room, and Fred sat down again to his composition. After a moment he looked up. "No great harm is done, after all," he said; "two or three alterations are much needed, and if I write it over again I can make them."

"So much for a cool head and not getting vexed," said Giles, laughing. "Our rules work well."

At night Fred tore his pants while climbing over a fence. "That's too bad!" he said.

"It can be helped," said Giles; "they can be mended."

"The way to help it is what troubles me," said Fred. "I don't like to ask mother, she has so much to do."

Giles proposed that he should get over his difficulty by asking Lucy to do the job for him, as her mother had taught her to mend very neatly. Fred was not at first disposed to adopt this measure. He knew that Lucy disliked mending very much, and was afraid she would be cross if asked to do it; but at last decided to run the risk of that. They found Lucy busily employed with a piece of embroidery, and quite absorbed with her work. Fred looked significantly at Giles when he saw how his sister was employed; but he concluded he had gone too far to retreat, and must make a bold push.

"I wish to ask a great favour of you, Lucy, but I fear I have come in the wrong time," said Fred.

"What do you want?" said Lucy.

"I am almost afraid to tell you. It's too bad to ask you to do what I know you dislike."

"You are a good while at getting to what is wanted," said Lucy, laughing. "Come, out with it."

Fred, thus encouraged, held up his foot and displayed the rent.

"Well, take them off; I will do my best," said Lucy, cheerfully.

"You are a dear, good sister," said Fred. "When I saw what you were about, I thought you would not be willing to do it."

"My uncommon amiability quite puzzles you, does it?" said Lucy, laughing. "I shall have to let you into the secret. To tell the truth, I have been thinking all day what I could do for you in return for your not getting vexed with me for blotting your composition. So now you have it."

"So much for our rules," exclaimed Giles, triumphantly. "They work to a charm."

"What rules?" inquired Lucy.

"We must tell Lucy all about it," said Giles.

They did tell her all about it, and the result was that she agreed to join them in trying the new rules.

Reviews.

A Commentary upon the Prophecy of Malachi; by that late Reverend, Godly, and Learned Divine, Mr. Richard Stock: with an Exercitation upon the same Prophecy, by Samuel Torshell. A Commentary upon the Book of Ruth; by Richard Bernard, Preacher of God's Word at Batcombe, in Somersetshire. A Comment on Ruth; by Thomas Fuller, B.D. Edinburgh: James Nichol. London: James Nisbet and Co. Dublin: G. Herbert.

THIS constitutes the third volume of the first year's series of Mr. Nichol's Commentaries of the Puritan Period. The three magnificent quarto volumes may be had at 16s. 6d., and are sold separately at 7s. each. The first two volumes we have already noticed as in every way worthy of the attention of all lovers of Biblical literature. The one before us, the third, is superior in interest to either of its predecessors. Mr. Richard Stock, the author of the Commentary on Malachi, was a native of York, afterwards a student of St. John's College, Cambridge, where he graduated as M.A. During his abode in St. John's College, even from his first beginnings, he was of eminent note for his unwearied industry, and singular proficiency in those studies of humanity that are as handmaids to divinity, and help to lay a good ground for any future profession. So that his care was to intertwine piety and humanity the one with the other, that as web and woof they run on even along together, through the whole course of his studies. Nor was he only careful of this practice himself, but (according to that of the apostle, Heb. x. 24., *Tò parozúnein*, "observe one another to whet on to godliness and well-doing") he was no less forward to incite others to the like practice. Yea, not only to incite them thereunto, but to assist them therein, and to afford what helps he could (which well also he could do) unto any that were desirous, yea, or but willing to embrace them, so that many of his friends had cause to bless God that even they came acquainted with him. In a word, whilst he stayed in the college, he gave beforehand, ere he came to it, evident signs of one likely to prove a skilful master-builder in God's work, and a winner of many souls unto God. From Cambridge Mr. Richard Stock removed to London, where, eventually, he became full working pastor of Allhallows for thirty-two years, and finally died in the discharge of his ministerial duties in the year 1626.

While rector of Allhallows Mr. Stock "baptised" (sprinkled) the infant John Milton. "There in the Register, in his own quaint hand, stands the record:—'The 20th day of December, 1608, was baptised JOHN, the sonne of John Mylton, scrivener.' Twelve days old! Thus little Johnny Milton played about the parish of Richard Stock—ran past the 'Mermaid,' all unconscious of one Shakspeare, one Ben Jonson, one Sir Walter Raleigh, and other immortals, within. Nor do we venture much in understanding that the good pastor of Allhallows, who was so welcome at 'The Spread Eagle' by Mr. and Mrs. Milton, catechised their auburn-haired and wonderful boy as he grew up; and perhaps by his counsels inclined the parents to that purpose of which many years afterwards their son thus spoke:—'The church, . . to whose service, by the intentions of my parents and *friends*, I was destined of a child.'"

At Allhallows Mr. Stock laboured with all his soul in the cause of his Lord. His early biographer says of him, "He was not one of those rath-ripe wits that promise fair in the

blossom but fail in the fruit; that, like comets, blaze brighter than the fixed stars for a time, but after a while vanish and come to nought, the matter of them being wholly spent or dispersed. But his proceedings in public were correspondent to his beginnings in private. When it pleased God to call him out, and to set him apart to that employment that he had ordained him to before, he proved a painful and faithful minister of Jesus Christ, a skilful and powerful dispenser of God's word."

"Of the writings of Richard Stock, only two slight mistakes were published by himself," one on Repentance, the other on the Death of Lord Harrington. His posthumous productions were, a quarto volume of Sermon-Lectures; and the "Commentary on Malachi," now before us. The "Truth's Champion," ascribed to him by Anthony-a-Wood and by Brook, was most probably by another author.

The "Commentary on Malachi" is very learned and very suggestive. Its exegesis is often beautiful, and its power of application striking. Had the author lived to revise it, he would no doubt have considerably condensed it. Sometimes much more is fetched out of the text, than we think God ever put into it. Still the doctrine is throughout sound, and the suggestions worthy of attention. Every expounder of Malachi will find valuable aid in this volume.

Mr. Samuel Torshell was the editor of Mr. R. Stock's Commentary, and added to it an Exercitation of his own on the same book. This constitutes the second work in the volume before us. Samuel Torshell was an M.A. of Christ's College, Cambridge, which was the college in earlier times of Latimer, and Heath, and Grindall; and in Torshell's days of John Milton, Sir Philip Sidney, John More, Hugh Broughton, Andrew Willet, John Mede, Henry More, Chaderton, Clerke, Dillingham, Edward Dering, Authur Hildersam, William Ames, and the Plato of English theology, John Howe. In 1629 Samuel Torshell was presented to the perpetual curacy of Bunbury, in Cheshire. He was appointed by the master and wardens of the Haberdashers' Company of London. From his quiet home at Bunbury he was compelled to flee by the troubles of the times. His subsequent course is not very clearly marked. In the record of his death, he is called "Preacher at Cripplegate." He died on the 23rd of March, 1649, probably at about fifty years of age. He left ten distinct works behind him. His learning and reading were something stupendous. His slightest works bear evidence of this. "With regard to the Exercitation on Malachi, now reprinted, it is necessarily brief as being merely supplementary to Stock; but it will be found suggestive in itself and in its citations, if the latter be followed up." It is deserving of the fame of the author.

Richard Bernard, whose Commentary on Ruth, is the third work in the goodly volume before us, was born in the year 1567. He, like Torshell, was M.A. of Christ's College, Cambridge. He removed from college to Epworth, in Lincolnshire, and while there was presented to the vicarage of Worksop, in Nottinghamshire. Thence he removed to Batcombe, in Somersetshire, on the presentation of the holy Dr. Bisse, and there he passed to his rest in March, 1641. He was succeded by the great and good Richard Alleine, who was one of the ejected in 1662.

The writings of Richard Bernard were numerous and various in character. His Commentary on Ruth has hitherto been very scarce and dear. We are glad to see it republished in this series. "It is perhaps as perfect an example of all Bernard's merits as any that could be selected. It is expository, doctrinal, practical, savoury, and full of living applications to every-day experience and life. It abounds with apophthegms and compressed thoughts that cleave to the memory."

Of Thomas Fuller's fragment on Ruth it is only necessary to say, that it is marked by all the author's usual quaintness, raciness, and originality. It is very appropriately included in the admirable volume before us.

In concluding this notice we again tender Mr. Nichol our sincere thanks

for thus exhuming the memorials of our "mighty dead," and trust that he will be sustained in a manner becoming the grandeur and practical importance of his enterprise.

The Doctrines of the Bible. A Course of Sermons. By A. McAUSLANE, Minister of Finsbury Chapel. Vol. I. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster-row. Glasgow: George Gallie. Cloth. Pp. 376.

A VOLUME of sensible, evangelical sermons, worthy of publication, and of general perusal. We do not accept all the author's geological speculations, but we admire his reverence for Scripture, and his evident desire to maintain intact the authority of the written Word. The volume is very handsomely got up.

The Pilgrim's Progress. By JOHN BUNYAN. Unabridged. With ninety-six Illustrations. Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster-row, London. 2d.

THIS is the *ne plus ultra* of cheap publishing. It is indeed one of the marvels of the age. The paper is good; the type, though necessarily small, is very clear; the illustrations are all pleasant to look at; in short, *it is by far the cheapest "Pilgrim's Progress" ever issued from the press.* We trust every young person who can read small type, and who does not possess the matchless work of the "great dreamer," will lose no time in purchasing a copy of this edition. To our Sunday scholars it will be a great boon.

The Class of a Thousand and One. A Sunday School Memorial. Third Edition. London: Elliot Stock.

A DEEPLY interesting memorial of a most admirably conducted class. It contains many very valuable suggestions for the conducting of such a class. Let it be circulated widely through our Sunday schools.

Puseyism: What it is. By the Rev. A. GORDON, LL.D. Second edition. London: Elliot Stock.

A VERY admirable exposé of Puseyism, and one which should be widely-circulated at the present crisis. When will our people awake to a suitable conviction of the dangers of this "damnable heresy"?

A History of Birchmeadow Sunday School, Broseley, to its Jubilee, 1864. To be had of T. Jones, 3, Spencer-place, Blackheath, S.E. 8d. Free by post.

A TRULY interesting jubilee memorial of a Sabbath school which God has eminently blessed. The style is racy and popular, and the facts detailed worthy of preservation.

The Annual Sermon preached on behalf of the Baptist Missionary Society, 1865. By the Rev. GEORGE GOULD, of Norwich. London: Yates and Alexander, and Elliot Stock.

WE had the privilege of hearing this thoughtful, able sermon. The only fault we have to find with it is, that military illustrations are used too profusely, and are worked "threadbare." Such illustrations are now very "hackneyed." With this slight drawback we cordially recommend the Sermon to our readers.

Clifton Sermons. By SEPTIMUS SEARS. London: Houlston and Wright, Paternoster-row. 2d. each.

No. 4. The text is from Isaiah lxii. 10, and the sermon full of sound doctrine. It would be a suitable present to any seeking soul. No. 5. This sermon is full of Christ, set forth as "a tree of life to all that lay hold upon him." We heartily wish our brother Sears success in this series.

The Sure Foundation. A Discourse upon Matthew vii. 24—27. By JOHN W. COLE. London: Caryl Book Society, 4, Crane-court, Fleet-street. 3d.

BRIEF, but good. Intended to assert the doctrine of salvation by Christ alone, which it does earnestly and well.

Culverhouse's Observations on the Discipline among the Brethren. London: Pewtress and Co. 1d.

THE only Scriptural discipline is that which allows the whole church a voice in the reception, the exclusion, and

the restoration of members. This is a right which is inherent in each separate Christian community called a church. "The Brethren," so called, will have to come to this; and we shall do well to imitate their weekly breaking of bread.

We have also received and cordially recommend

The Christian Monitor; or, Selections from Pious Authors, for March and April. London: Partridge, 9, Paternoster-row. The Selections are deeply interesting.

An Appeal to Liberate Jerusalem. By C. F. ZIMPEL. London: Stevenson, 54, Paternoster-row. Very singular. Railways in Palestine are to usher in the Millennium.

The Sower. London: Houlston and Wright; and,

The Little Gleaner. By the same publishers.

Intelligence.

HUNGARY.

The following is from the *Archives du Christianisme*, of April 1st, 1865:—

PROCEEDINGS OF "THE TRUE BELIEVERS."

Under this title the political journals publish the following communication, of which we have no need to declare the grave importance. It forms not only a beautiful episode of contemporaneous history, which surprises at the same time that it charms us; but is, further, a signal example of the faithfulness of God towards his people, and of the faithfulness of our Hungarian brethren towards God and his Word.

Vienna, March 8th, 1865.

A case of great interest came yesterday before the tribunal of Correctional Police. It related to a religious sect which has been formed under the name of "The True Believers." This sect was founded by a journeyman tailor, who came from the north of Germany. This man has been making an active "propaganda" in Hungary, where 2000 believers profess the new religion of "the pure doctrine of Jesus Christ." Here the number of believers is smaller, but it is difficult to speak positively. The subjects of this prosecution are Seager, a turner, and Strill, a shoemaker; the former aged forty-five, the latter forty-nine.

The court was filled with people, who watched the proceedings with the most lively interest.

PRESIDENT. What is your religion?

DEFENDANT (Seager). I was a Roman Catholic, and *then* I believed in nothing. *Now* I am a True Believer.

P. What do you mean by a True Believer?

D. One who believes in the principles of Jesus Christ, such as he taught, and according to the Old and New Testament.

P. Are you aware that the forming and maintaining of new religious sects are not authorised by the State?

D. I don't know why the principles that Jesus Christ himself taught should be interdicted.

P. You have held meetings?

D. Yes sir.

P. Where do the members of your sect hold their meetings habitually?

D. Sometimes in my house, sometimes in that of another believer, sometimes under the arch of heaven.

P. What do you do at these meetings?

D. One of the brethren reads the Word of God in the Old or New Testament, and explains it.

P. How many have attended these meetings?

D. We have never counted.

P. Tell us the number, as near as you can.

D. Perhaps thirty or forty persons.

P. Have you not converted people?

D. Yes, truly. I have converted people who were in sin, and who came to enquire of me.

P. What are the ceremonies of your religion?

D. We have no ceremonies. We read the Word of God, and pray, and sing.

P. Can any one be received into this association?

D. No; not while they are in sin. But we prepare them that wish to be received, and examine them to know if their heart be sincere.

P. Do you believe that one man can know if the heart of another man be pure and blameless?

D. Why should that not be possible? The magistrate examines me, and yet he is but a man.

P. Have you a sacrament of baptism?

D. We do not recognise such baptism as is now practised. We believe in immersion, as was instituted by the Lord and practised by John the Baptist.

P. At what age do you baptise?

D. When people can think for themselves—can understand religion and know their own mind.

P. Have you the sacrament of the eucharist?

D. We have no sacrament. We believe that Christ constituted nothing of the kind. But we have an eucharist.

P. In what does your eucharist consist?

D. We partake together of bread and wine.

P. Who administers your eucharist?

D. Some brother.

P. You must know that the State does not tolerate any religious sect which it has not authorised?

D. The Emperor has proclaimed liberty of faith and of conscience.

P. True; but this liberty does not include any religions but such as are recognised by the State.

D. Our religion is the pure doctrine of Jesus Christ.

P. Of how many members does your association consist?

D. I will not tell you; for, if I should tell you, I should be a traitor, and offend my Lord.

P. He is not a traitor who submits to the authorities. Do you not believe that the authorities are established by God and the State?

D. Oh yes.

P. Why, then, will you not give them the information desired?

D. Because we know what that means, and we are not willing to expose our brethren to persecutions.

P. Do you not believe in the righteousness of the judges?

D. The apostles have written that "there is none righteous."

P. Can this rule be applied to the members of your association?

D. They ought to be righteous, because they ought to be without sin.

The announcement of these answers, so simple and energetic, made a strong impression on the judges, as well as all that were present. The defendant Strill answered in the same spirit.

PRESIDENT. Where do you hold your meetings?

D. We have no fixed place.

P. Why have you not fixed on some place?

D. To protect us from persecutions.

P. You knew, then, that you were doing wrong, and ought not to do so.

D. It is written, "If they persecute you in one place, seek refuge in another."

P. Have you ever been in collision with the authorities?

D. Yes. I did not think it right to baptise my child, but, by order of the authorities, the Piarists (a religious order) took the child, and I believe they baptised him; but I was not present.

P. Why do you refuse to baptise infants?

D. Because an infant can neither think nor exercise any will of itself.

P. Your actions fall under the sentence of the law.

D. Our Lord Jesus did not sin, and yet he was crucified. After his sublime example, I shall persevere and endure. The Word and the true doctrine of Jesus Christ will finally triumph.

Seager has been sentenced to three weeks' imprisonment, with fasting; and Strill to two weeks, also with fasting.

"Beware of men, for they will deliver you up to the councils. . . . . But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak."—*From the "Revival," May 5th*, 1865.

FORMATION OF THE CHURCH AT ZION CHAPEL,

WILDERNESS ROW, LONDON.

IT is somewhat refreshing to record at times the progress of events which show that truth "has not utterly fallen," and that there are still those who are not ashamed to hold fast the distinctive principles of our denomination.

For a considerable period the state of the church assembling in Spencer-place, Goswell-road, has been in a very unsatisfactory condition, arising mainly from the lax views of gospel truth as set forth in the ministry, together with the avowed adoption of Open Communion views, and attempts to introduce the practice, the result of which was much bitterness of feeling towards those who were desirous to uphold in all their integrity the practices of the Church of Christ by maintaining intact as one great fundamental principle, "one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism."

Many of the brethren feeling, under such circumstances, that their spiritual welfare, as well as their usefulness, was in a great measure hindered, in order to avoid strife as followers of the Lord Jesus, held a series of prayer-meetings, and sought Divine direction as to what steps could be or should be taken in the emergency to which they were driven. The providence of God having removed our brother Edgar Hewlett from Cranfield, Beds, after labouring as the pastor of the Baptist church in that place for nine years, directed him to London, and ultimately to this building, then unoccupied, where for a few months, after the needful repairs had been effected, a few brethren occasionally assembled for public worship and devotional exercise. Their numbers being small, it was deemed unwise to form themselves into a church, until circumstances, or an increase of members, would justify such a step. In the interim, some of the brethren who had heard Mr. Hewlett preach, reported favourably of his preaching, that his theological principles were sound, and his practice purely Scriptural. After seeking further direction from him who is the sole Head of the Church, some of the brethren considered that they had been led by "the pillar and cloud" to that point which justified their withdrawal from the church at Spencer-place. Led by the desire to be ever found in the sanctuary, they resolved to unite with those brethren who had assembled here from time to time for worship and, by the help of God's grace, to form a church on such principles as are recognised as being those of Strict Communion Baptists, trusting that such a step would be the means of ministering to their spiritual necessities, and that under a faithful ministry they might find their spiritual strength renewed, and, in humble dependence on the God of all grace, be enabled to rejoice even in the trials which had befallen them.

Accordingly, the friends met on Lord's Day morning, March 26th, 1865, for the purpose of forming a church at Zion Baptist Chapel, Wilderness-row, when our venerable brother C. Woollacott, late of Little Wild-street, preached. In the afternoon the friends again assembled, and felt deeply the circumstances under which they were convened. A spirit of solemnity seemed to pervade every heart, and all, we trust, felt that holy influence and those solemn obligations which accompany the devoted renewal of our vows to that gracious God who in the aboundings of his mercy had brought us out of nature's darkness into the glorious light and liberty of the children of God. The proceedings commenced at three o'clock by brother Newton briefly stating the purpose for which the meeting was convened and proposing that Mr. C. Woollacott be appointed moderator.

The proposition was seconded by brother Eaton, and unanimously agreed to.

The chair having been taken, brother Mose, pastor of the Baptist church at Cranfield, read the 133rd Psalm and invoked the Divine blessing, after which a hymn was sung.

The Moderator then called upon brother Newton to give the names of such brethren and sisters in the Lord as were desirous of being united in church fellowship.

Brother Newton then read the names of thirty-five friends who were so.

The Moderator then addressed a few affectionate remarks to the brethren and sisters, and proceeded to give to each the right hand of fellowship, recognising thereby the constituted church.

Brother Mose then gave a short address, affectionately advising the members to cordial and harmonious action, deep and fervent prayer, and a constant and unswerving adherence to that truth which was once delivered to the saints.

The Moderator next intimated that, as a church, we were in a position that rendered it desirable to choose a pastor as the next step in the proceedings of the day, when brother Janes proposed that brother Edgar Hewlett be chosen as pastor.

Brother Foster seconded the proposition, which was unanimously adopted.

Brother Hewlett (who on the evening of the previous Lord's Day had administered the ordinance of believers' baptism to four candidates for church fellowship) then intimated his acceptance of the pastorate.

It was then proposed that two deacons should be chosen by ballot, which being taken, brethren Newton, sen., and Eaton (both of whom had held the same office at Spencer-place) were elected.

The church then nominated brother Newton, sen., as secretary, and brother Eaton as treasurer.

The proceedings of the afternoon terminated by brother Hewlett commending the church to God in prayer.

The brethren afterwards took tea together previous to the evening services, and it is hoped that each one present at these services will with much joy remember the solemn transactions, and realise the fact that a day spent in the sanctuary is better than a thousand spent elsewhere.

On the following Tuesday, March 29th, the public recognition of the pastor took place, when about 100 friends took tea together, and the following ministers delivered short addresses or otherwise took part in the proceedings:—Mr. Woollacott, on "The Duties and Privileges of the Pastor;" Mr. Cozens, on "The Duties and Privileges of Church Members;" Mr. Dearsly, on "How we can best glorify God;" Mr. Stringer, on "The Unity of the Spirit, and how to keep it;" Mr. Sindall, on "Our Present Position and Future Prospects;" Mr. W. Norton, on "What we must do if our brother offend us."

On the first Lord's Day in April the newly-formed church observed the ordinance of the Lord's supper.

On Lord's Day, April 23rd, two sermons were preached on behalf of the Baptist Missionary Society. The attendance was good, and at the close of the service the sum of £2 17s. 6d. was collected. The sermon in the morning was preached by Mr. Lomas, of Leicester, and that in the evening by Mr. A. W. Heritage, of Naunton, Gloucestershire.

During the past month a "Christian Effort Society" has been organised, and is getting into working order.

The progress of the friends towards establishing the Sabbath school is very encouraging.

We trust that Zion's Lord will pour out a large blessing upon this church, and upon the works of faith and labours of love of all its members.

GOSPEL OAK FIELDS BAPTIST CHURCH,

ASSEMBLING IN ALBERT HALL, MALDEN ROAD.

THE anniversary of the entrance of this church into Albert Hall was celebrated on Monday evening, April 24th. Tea was provided in the school-room, and the public meeting was held in the hall at seven o'clock. After the singing of the well-known hymn, "Blest be the tie that binds," and prayer by Mr. Dowdall, the object of the meeting was introduced by the chairman, the Rev. C. Woollacott, in a few words of cordial sympathy. Mr. Wilkin then gave an account of the origin and history of the church, and of the views of doctrine and practice on which it was founded. Mr. Coles, the superintendent of the Sunday school, next read the report of that institution, from which it appeared that 700 children had passed through the school since its commencement in September, 1861, and that 220 were now in attendance. Excellent and appropriate addresses were delivered by the Revs. H. Dowson, of Bradford, W. Trotman, of Blackmore, and D. Wassell, of Bath, on the Church's Allegiance to Christ, Work in the World, and Ultimate Triumph. The attendance, both at the tea and public meeting, was very encouraging. Two excellent sermons were preached on the following Sunday by the Rev. J. Stock, of Devonport.

RECOGNITION SERVICES.

STANNINGLY, NEAR LEEDS.

ON Wednesday, May 3rd, recognition services in connection with the settlement of the Rev. Henry Watts, late of Golcar, as pastor of the church and congregation, took place in the Baptist Chapel, Stanningly. In the afternoon a sermon, eminently suited for the occasion, was preached by the

Rev. J. P. Chown, of Bradford, from Psalm lx. 4. At the conclusion of the service, which was well attended, a public tea meeting was held in the Primitive Methodist school-room, kindly lent for the occasion, when about 300 sat down to tea. The public meeting in the evening was held in the Baptist chapel, which was well filled; Mr. Joseph Bradley, one of the deacons, occupying the chair. After singing and prayer, Mr. Joseph Gaunt, deacon, gave some interesting details concerning the state of the cause in the past and present, and concluded by giving Mr. Watts, on behalf of the church, publicly the right hand of Christian fellowship, an example which was afterwards followed by the Rev. J. P. Chown and other speakers. Mr. Watts responded, giving in a brief address a few of the reasons that had induced him to accept the call of the church. Very cordial addresses of welcome to the newly elected pastor, and of Christian sympathy with him and his congregation, were then made by the Rev. J. P. Chown, of Bradford, E. Parker, of Farsley, J. Haslam, of Gildersome, A. Ashworth, of Bramley, and J. Harper, of Horsforth, Baptists; G. W. Harris, of Stanningly, and J. Atkinson, of Pudsey, Independents; and E. Browning, of the Methodist Free Church, Bramley.

BAPTIST CHAPEL, NEW MILL, TRING.

RECOGNITION services in connection with the settlement of the Rev. R. Shindler as pastor of this church, were held on Tuesday, May 9th. In the afternoon the Rev. W. P. Balfern, of Hammersmith, preached an interesting sermon from 2 Thes. iii. 1, after which 170 persons took tea in Mr. S. Liddington's malting. In the evening a meeting was held, under the presidency of T. H. Harris, Esq., of Woodford, who gave expression to his high esteem of the pastor, founded on an acquaintance of some years. A very appropriate prayer having been offered by the Rev. W. Emery, of Hemel Hempstead, on behalf of minister and people, the Rev. T. Peters, of Watford, addressed the church in a pointed, vigorous, and telling manner. The Rev. W. P. Balfern then gave a very affectionate address to the pastor, characterised by originality and penetration no less than by spirituality and practical sagacity. The Rev. W. Woods, of Woolwich, followed in an address to the congregation, remarkable for its solemnity, directness, and spiritual fervour. After a few words from Mr. Shindler, the Rev. W. Sexton, of Tring, concluded with a warm-hearted prayer. The other brethren who took part in the services were the Revs. J. Mountford, of Leighton-Buzzard, T. Williams, of Aston-Clinton, and J. Butcher, of Weston-Turville. The attendance was good throughout. The church at New Mill has been in existence 210 years, having been founded in the time of the Commonwealth.

NORTH-WESTERN ASSOCIATION.

THE annual meetings were held in the Baptist Chapel, Waterbarn, on Wednesday and Thursday, the 7th and 8th of June. On the afternoon of the first day, brother J. Howe, the pastor of the church at Waterbarn, was chosen moderator. The letters from the churches (fourteen in number) reported a total increase of 121, and a total decrease of 100, leaving a clear increase of 21 members, a number far below that which has been reported for several years past. The circular letter was prepared by brother H. Hall, of Bacup: subject, "The duty of believers to give according to their ability to the cause of Christ." The letter was warmly approved of by the brethren, and adopted as the letter of the association, together with an expression of sympathy with the writer, in the circumstances under which he has been led to resign (on account of ill health) his pastorate at Zion Chapel, Bacup. The preacher in the evening was brother T. Durant, of Liverpool, who delivered an edifying discourse from 2 Timothy, iv. 6—8. A collection was then made in aid of the association fund.

On Thursday morning, June 8th, a refreshing season was enjoyed at the early prayer meeting, when several brethren offered fervent prayer. Brother Smith conducted this service, and

briefly addressed us on the subject of "Christian joy."

At half-past ten the friends again assembled. The Moderator addressed the meeting on the state of the churches as presented in their respective letters and statistics. Earnest practical addresses were delivered by brethren Harvey, of Little Leigh, Dawson, of Liverpool, Fish, of Accrington, and J. G. Hall, of Bacup.

In the afternoon, the ministers and messengers met to transact the business of the association, the Moderator in the chair. The next meetings to be held (by invitation) at Onston, Norley, on the 6th and 7th June, 1866. Brother J. G. Hall to be the association preacher, and the circular letter, on "Religion at Home," to be written by brother Smith, of Bacup.

Resolutions were passed expressive of gratitude at the prospect of the termination of the American war, and deep sympathy with the American people, in the great loss they have sustained by the foul assassination of their late honoured and beloved president; and also commending the objects of the "Freedman's Aid Association," to the consideration and support of the churches. Votes of thanks were accorded to the friends at Waterbarn for their hospitality in entertaining the association, and to the Moderator for presiding at its meetings.

In the evening, at seven o'clock, the final service was held. After devotional exercises, conducted by brother Wilkinson, of Latchford, an appropriate sermon was preached by brother Vasey, of Lumb, from Psalm cxxii. 6.

The congregation then sung with much spirit "The Christian's Farewell," a sacred melody dear to many, from the fact that the hymn itself was composed by the late revered and beloved Joseph Harbottle. Brother Howe, as the resident minister, then solemnly commended the brethren to God in prayer, and thus closed another annual gathering characterised throughout by the greatest harmony of spirit, and furnishing an illustration of the sentiment, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

BAPTIST SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

AN aggregate meeting of the teachers and friends was held in the lower room at Exeter Hall, on Tuesday evening, May 2nd. The president, H. Cooper, Esq., occupied the chair.

The proceedings were commenced by singing a hymn, and Mr. Moritz Geissler (missionary from Saxony) implored the Divine blessing.

The Chairman, in his introductory address, referred to the opposition with which the Union had had to contend, and that from the denomination to which it belonged. He wished God-speed to all denominations; but he was specially bound to support his own.

Mr. JAMES (the Minute Secretary) read a brief statement of the progress the Union had made since the annual meeting in December last. Special reference was made to the "Baptist Sunday School Magazine," and to the necessity of increased support by the churches and schools of the denomination. Literary contributions were needed, to give increased variety to its pages, and scraps of Sunday school intelligence would be very acceptable. The publication of a Catechism had been somewhat delayed, owing to the anxiety of the committee that nothing should issue from the society that is not in accordance with the Word of God. A deputation had been appointed to the meeting of the Suffolk and Norfolk Association, in June, and various deputations had attended the annual meetings of schools in connection with the Union.

Mr. Kemp, the Statistical Secretary, gave a brief numerical report of the schools connected with the Union.

The Chairman stated that Mr. Stokes, of Manchester, was unavoidably absent, and called upon Mr. Wyard, in his stead, to move the adoption of the report.

Mr. Wyard remarked that he was unexpectedly called upon to speak; but he felt deeply interested in the prosperity of the Union, and believed there was great necessity for its existence. The aspect of Sabbath-schools was somewhat changed: their object now was not merely to teach poor

children to read, but to inculcate gospel truth; and the nearer their tuition approached to the truth, the greater their importance. He believed that no Sunday School Society was so near the truth as the Baptist Sunday School Union.

Mr. Baugh, of Shrewsbury, seconded the motion.

Mr. Wilson, the Finance Secretary, made a brief but telling speech, urging a liberal support of the Union; after which the collection was made, which amounted to between £16 and £17.

The second hymn was then sung.

Mr. Wall, of Gravesend, moved the following resolution:—"That this meeting desires gratefully to acknowledge the Lord's goodness in blessing the humble endeavours of the committee to unite the friends of the Strict Baptist denomination, in their efforts to promote the cause of truth among the rising generation."

Mr. Hawkins seconded the motion.

Mr. Williamson moved—"That the committee, feeling sensible that they have undertaken a great and important work, request the sympathy and co-operation of the churches, pastors, and teachers, by their prayers and contributions."

Mr. Meeres seconded the resolution.

After the third hymn had been sung, and a vote of thanks given to the Chairman, the benediction was pronounced, and the meeting closed.

SUNDAY SCHOOL ANNIVERSARIES.

INWELL TERRACE, BACUP.—On Sunday, May 21st, the annual services on behalf of the Sabbath school in connection with the above church were held. In the morning a very useful address to the teachers, parents, and scholars, was given by J. Dawson, Esq., J.P. In the afternoon and evening the Rev. A. Pitt, of Rochdale, gave two admirable discourses to crowded and attentive audiences. The collections amounted to £29 2s. 8d., being a considerable advance on the previous year.

GOODSHAW.—On Sunday, June 18th, two sermons were preached in behalf of the Sunday school in the new Baptist Chapel, by the Rev. James Owen, of Liverpool; in the afternoon from Acts xix. 15; and in the evening from Heb. ix. 16. The attendance was good, and the collections amounted to upwards of £31.

HUNCOAT.—The annual school sermons were preached in the Baptist Chapel, on Lord's Day, May 21st, by the Rev. J. Howe, of Waterbarn, when collections were made amounting to upwards of £16.

LERWICK CHAPEL CASE.

CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED.

	£	s.	d.
By Rev. J. Stock, Devonport	0	10	0
By Mr. Gavin Henderson.			
Collected by Mr. James Thomson, U.S. America	5	0	0
Baptist Church, Westry Orkney	6	6	0
Mr. H. Anderson, do.	0	5	0
By Mr. Gavin Henry.			
Collected by Mr. T. Oliver, Sunderland (5th remittance)	5	5	6
,, Mr. R. B. Wallace, Edinburgh	2	0	0
,, Mr. J. Inkster, Burra Isle	1	10	0
,, Mrs. Rebecca Inkster	0	3	0

The trustees gratefully acknowledge receipts of the above sums, and are thankful to say that, after paying incidental expenses they are only £40 in debt (exclusive of pavement). After receiving so much aid from Christian friends, they can hardly expect more; yet should any friends feel disposed to aid them in clearing off this to them, "heavy burden," subscriptions will be thankfully received by Rev. J. Stock, Devonport, or by Mr. Gavin Henderson, Merchant, Dunrossness, Shetland.

RECEIVED FOR THE BAPTIST TRACT SOCIETY.

By the TREASURER.	£	s.	d.
Mr. Rogers, Peckham	S.	0	10	0
Mr. Hewett, London	S.	0	10	6
Rev. G. Holland, Winchester	S.	0	10	0
Mr. Read, Brighton	S.	0	10	0
Mr. J. T. Briscoe, London	S.	0	5	0
Jesse Hobson, Esq., ,,	S.	1	1	0
Mr. Thomas Wilshire, Plaistow	S.	0	5	0
Mr. Le Riche, London	S.	0	10	0
Collected at Exeter Hall		3	6	10
Rev. Dr. Price, Aberdare	S.	1	1	0
E. G. Price, Esq., ,,	S.	1	1	0
Rev. R. W. Overbury, Devonport	D.	1	0	0
T. M. Whitaker, Esq., Blackheath	S.	1		0
Hill Cliff Auxiliary	S.	0	10	0
Friend, by Rev. W. Frith		0	2	6